

The background of the entire image is a stylized illustration of a diverse group of people. In the top left, a man with orange hair and glasses wears a white mask and a dark suit. Next to him is a woman in a red hijab and orange top wearing a white mask. To her right is an older man with white hair, glasses, and a light blue surgical mask, wearing a red shirt and tie. Below the man in the suit is a woman with red hair wearing a white mask and a dark top. In the bottom left, a woman with black hair and bangs wears a white mask and a dark top. In the bottom center, a woman with long red hair and glasses wears a white mask and an orange top. In the bottom right, a woman with black hair wears a white mask and a dark top. The background features abstract shapes in shades of blue, green, and orange.

# ACT NOW FOR SDG16+

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PEACE, JUSTICE, INCLUSION AND STRONG  
INSTITUTIONS IN A PANDEMIC

[#SDG16Plus](#)



# PEACE, JUSTICE, INCLUSION AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS IN A PANDEMIC

**Our world before COVID-19 was in crisis**, marked by growing inequality and uneven concentration of power, failing institutions, and a weakened multilateral system. More than half a million people continue to die from violence each year, with half of the world's children and at least a third of its women being victims of violence. Child marriage, female genital mutilation, modern slavery, and other abuses remain commonplace. More than five billion people—two-thirds of the world's population—lack meaningful access to justice.

**The COVID-19 pandemic is now testing humanity's resilience to the extreme**, exposing and reinforcing long-standing grievances, injustices, inequalities and fragility around the world. Human development is on course to decline this year for the first time since 1990. We see widespread protests in cities around the world, igniting calls for justice for all people. A growing economic crisis and political, social, and cultural dislocation are hurting billions of people, especially those who are already vulnerable or living in fragile and conflict-affected countries. As lockdowns are lifted, rising frustrations and unmet grievances could fuel further polarization, social unrest, fear and desperation. Amid increasing national tensions, global cooperation and our ability for collective action are facing renewed pressure.

**It is now more clear than ever how crucially important national and local action for peace, justice and inclusion are for our common future.** Even as the SDG16+ targets were being negotiated, we knew that their implementation would be demanding and critical to unlocking the 2030 Agenda as a whole. Without reduced inequality, violence, injustice and corruption, it will be impossible to make the necessary progress on global agendas such as education, health, gender equality, and climate change. The pandemic may push 60 million people into extreme poverty this year, setting in motion massive unemployment, a global economic crisis, and deepening inequality even further.



## ACT FOR A BETTER FUTURE

As a group of countries, civil society organizations, international organizations, and global partnerships working to implement SDG16+, the 2030 Agenda's goals on peace, justice and inclusion, we have come together in solidarity to offer a platform for building more peaceful, just and inclusive societies for all.

The UN Secretary-General has stressed that we need to “build back better”, guided by the principle of universality and the commitment to leave no one behind enshrined in the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Together, we call on governments, the international community and leaders in every sector to urgently make SDG16+ the foundation for reset and recovery efforts, and for building more resilient societies and institutions going forward.**

# We commit to ACT on reducing all forms of violence



Early and targeted responses at all levels are critical to addressing shifting patterns of violence arising from the pandemic. We call for urgent action to:

- ➔ **Dedicate targeted spending on 'what works'** to address the compounding effects of interpersonal and collective violence and longer-term social and economic spillover effects.
- ➔ **Embrace a fragility, conflict and violence lens** across all response and recovery strategies. This requires integrating risk mitigation within emergency health strategies to prevent new disruptive and dangerous patterns of violence and doubling our efforts to control the flows and circulation of arms.
- ➔ **Prioritize gender-based prevention strategies** in national response plans, recovery packages and budgeting of resources, ensuring women and children are front and center in leadership, policy creation, and implementation.
- ➔ **Protect people from violence** by targeting hotspots where insecurity is growing, investing in local networks, community organizations and creating safe spaces for children, youth and women at risk of gender-based and domestic violence.
- ➔ **Engage local governments and partners on the front-line**, such as city mayors, faith-based leaders, civic groups, business, and other local peacebuilders, who can directly influence COVID-19 responses and violence reduction, promote positive behavior change, and build lasting peace and stability.



# We commit to ACT on people-centered justice for all



People-centered justice approaches are needed more than ever and will help societies manage the institutional, social, and economic fallout from the pandemic. We call for urgent action to:

- **Enforce emergency measures in a fair, just and proportionate manner** by independently scrutinizing new measures and holding political leaders to account, introducing safeguards for at-risk communities, supporting justice actors to work in partnership with communities & other stakeholders and respecting human rights.
- **Make people your partners** through prioritizing non-court solutions and alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, making law and procedures less adversarial and faster by working closely with community leaders and grassroots actors, and leveraging technology to provide services over the phone or virtually.
- **Protect the justice workforce** by helping them stay healthy, making them a priority for testing programs, providing counseling and support, protecting them from violence, and ensuring they are being paid and their labor rights respected.
- **Focus on preventing injustices from occurring** through legal empowerment, online services, ombuds' institutes and other non-court services to nip disputes in the bud and address the structural roots of economic injustices.
- **Use justice to rebuild economies** by ensuring fair distribution of recovery packages and greater economic participation of marginalized communities hit hardest by the pandemic. This requires using people-centered data and evidence to understand, design and implement solutions for current and emerging challenges.

# We commit to ACT on building more equal and inclusive societies

The pandemic presents an opportunity to tackle systemic inequalities and achieve the central promise of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind. We call for urgent action to:

- ➔ **Forge a new social contract** rooted in rebuilding trust in public and private institutions and ensuring that everyone contributes fairly to prevent the cost of the crisis from being borne by those who can least afford it. This requires giving special attention in our crisis management and recovery programs to the poor, unemployed and vulnerable communities, and by reaching those furthest behind first.
- ➔ **Leave no one behind by adopting an inclusive, whole-of-society approach** that recognizes the decisive role of governments and leverages engaged and empowered businesses and individuals. This includes coordinating public health emergency actions, protecting and where possible enlarging civic space, and combating misinformation and disinformation.
- ➔ **Design accountable and transparent fiscal policies** that deliver for all people through scaling up public investment in health care to protect the most vulnerable, removing financial, political, and regulatory barriers to public services, and shifting towards universal social protection for all.
- ➔ **Invest in intersectional and gender-disaggregated data** to guide response and recovery efforts, keeping privacy and security in mind for person-level data. With this data, all sectors can work better together to fill gaps and address the needs of all communities.
- ➔ **Ramp up global solidarity efforts and collaboration mechanisms.** The race to save lives, develop a vaccine, and generate global economic recovery must lift all countries and all people. This will require immediate debt relief and large mobilization of resources from both public and private sources.

# TAKE ACTION NOW FOR SDG16+

Everyone can support this effort—and we hope that leaders across all sectors take these actions to increase their commitment, investment and resources to make SDG16+ the foundation for reset and recovery efforts.

Together with our partners in civil society, business and government, we stand ready to rise to the challenge.

Join us and take action now for SDG16+



Take **#SDG16Plus** action  
and support this commitment by  
completing this [google form](#).

A full list of supporting organizations  
will be shared during the  
SDG Summit in September 2020.

For further details, please email [contact@sdg16.plus](mailto:contact@sdg16.plus)

